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## THE PEASANT-PROPRIETOR CRAZE.

At intervals of a few years, as long as we can remember, there breaks out a craze, that nothing could be more salutary than the creation of a large body of peasant proprietors, each with his family occupying from five to ten acres of land, so as to form a sturdy intelligent yeomanry, the pride and social safety of the body-politic. The persons who throw out these glowing suggestions for public approval are for the most part politicians or literary theorists who have no practical experience in the treatment of land. They doubtless speak or write in good faith. The topic is attractive. Nothing is more delightful than to picture a cure for poverty by a return to that imaginary period the Golden Age.

Very poetical and beautiful these fancies, but desperately at variance with the mental aptitudes, and the conditions which ordinarily govern society. That such is the case, we may offer the following considerations. In the first place, we take it to be a self-evident truth that the use of land is to produce food, and that the more it produces, the better is it for the community at large. Hence, setting aside exceptional cases where there is a necessity for recreation, any plan which tends to limit productiveness for the general benefit, is objectionable. While, on the same principle, everything that skill and capital can effect should be employed in the improvement and cultivation of the soil, with the view of bringing it into the highest state of fertility. It is a mere truism that land is very various in quality, as is the climate, on which fertility largely depends. The soil of the Netherlands, for example, naturally produces far more than by any expedient can be procured from comparatively sterile and humid districts in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

It would be possible for a family near a populous city to make a comfortable living from no more than two or three acres of rich land, by the cultivation and sale of vegetables; but that would be gardening, not agriculture. In Italy may be seen a combination of agriculture and gardening.

So fertile is the soil, and so fine the climate, that there are commonly two crops a year; and we have the spectacle of vines, oranges, citrons, melons, and pomegranates growing in the open air amidst crops of grain. By this combination of advantages, a farm of three acres and a half will support a family of five persons in comfort. Circumstances are totally different in the north of Europe, where, for the most part, farming is a constant struggle with nature, or at least conducted under difficulties. In obedience to a popular craze, peasant proprietorship was some time ago introduced into Norway; but the prevalent state of affairs is far from satisfactory, for it is signalised by bad farming and pauperism.

In France, owing to a law dating from the Revolution, which enjoins the equal division of property among children, the land has in many cases been divided and subdivided down and down, so as to be at length partitioned into small possessions of only a few acres, out of which a living has to be wrung the best way possible. Those who have not seen it can hardly imagine the intense industry, the severe drudgery, and parsimonious habits of the small French proprietors. Early and late, every member of the family is toiling at hand-labour in the unclosed fields. The fare is of the very poorest. The sole object in life is to save. Not a sou is spent on books, or newspapers, or anything out of the dullest routine. The costume is of the scantiest and meanest. With a view to limit claimants in succession, families are ordinarily restricted to two children, sometimes only one child; wherefore the population of France is decreasing to a degree that is a little alarming in a national point of view. There are other evils. Brought up in ignorance, the people in the rural districts can lend no intelligent assistance in public affairs, and become puppets in the hands of political adventurers or of official dictators. Surely, even were it practicable, such is not the social condition to be aimed at for any section of the British islands.

The plan of allocating small parcels of land in

long leasehold at a small annual rent, for the benevolent purpose of rearing an independent and respectable body of peasant occupants, has been tried in several places in Scotland, and as far as we have heard, the experiments have been generally unsuccessful. Sooner or later, as it would appear, the families to be benefited get into debts and difficulties, fall away from the original design, and the properties in time are either coalesced or revert to the landlord. Where the families linger on as crofters or cotters, and have no other means of subsistence, they lapse into a condition of semi-pauperism and wretchedness. From all that has fallen under our own notice, any expectation of a family living in decent comfort on the produce of five to ten acres of land, even if but a trifling annual rent be payable, is dismally hopeless. Were the land given even for nothing, the project of so small a farm could not answer. The family making the attempt must have a dwelling, however plain, of two or three apartments, which has to be kept in repair; must either keep a horse or hire one when wanted; must feed cattle for the sake of manure, or buy artificial restoratives; must do all the harvesting, or hire labour for the purpose; must get the thrashing effected at some outlay; must keep a cow for a supply of milk; must possess sufficient capital to pay rates, taxes, and accounts when payment is demanded. To expect that a man, though a Hercules in strength, and reasonably thrifty and intelligent, can with his own hands, aided by wife and children, make a decent livelihood and pay his way out of the proceeds of such a small and difficult-to-be-conducted agricultural concern, is in this country an impossibility. A man farming a piece of ground on so limited a scale, or of a few acres larger, would live a life worse than that of a slave. He would not enjoy the comforts of a hired labourer at a pound a week. His troubles would be endless. His existence a dreary burden. The grave a relief.

No wonder that benevolently conceived schemes of this kind should have broken down. The business of an agriculturist or of a store-farmer in the United Kingdom requires to be conducted on that large and creditable scale in which skill, capital, and enterprise find their proper exercise, not alone for individual benefit, but for the advantage of the entire community. We need not describe an improved system of husbandry. It is embraced in good-sized farms of four to five hundred acres, conducted with the best mechanical and scientific appliances, and entered upon only by persons possessing a capital of at least four thousand, or more likely five thousand, pounds, and who are insured a lease ordinarily of nineteen years, during which there is a fair chance of getting out of the land all that is put into it. According to the practice in Scotland, which we think could hardly be improved upon, the landlord, at the beginning of every lease, puts the farm

establishment in proper tenantable order, so that no claim for improvements has to be put forward by the farmer. It may seem a hardship that a certain specified rent should be paid. But how, with justice, is that to be helped? A good farm in workable order such as we speak of, probably cost the proprietor or one of his predecessors five-and-twenty thousand pounds; and after paying all outlays, the money received half-yearly as rent does not yield two per cent. on the investment. Land, in fact, is the least remunerative of anything that can be purchased. It is for the most part acquired only for the honour of the thing, and a costly honour it is. In some respects the tenant is the better off of the two. If he does not find the farm remunerative, he can give it up at the end of his lease. On some estates, farmers remain from generation to generation, the farm being valued each time the lease is renewed. We know cases where after a successful career, tenants have bought farms and become their own landlords. To this there can be no objection. Only, it is to be kept in mind, that by the system of renting their farm, men with a limited capital are able to enter the profession.

The marked feature in the system of leases of land in Scotland is the perfect liberty on both sides—liberty in the proprietor to give a lease to whom he pleases, liberty in the tenant to take a farm or let it alone. Fixity of tenure at a specified rent would be alike abhorrent to both. Owing to a possible reduction in market prices, fixity of tenure might bring ruin on the farmer, while it would amount to a qualified confiscation of the rights of the landlord. If these views be correct, the cry for fixity of tenure among certain classes in Ireland seems ill-advised and unreasonable. In all cases, as it strikes us, the proper plan is to let land, like everything else, find its natural marketable value. We would go further, and say, that the fewer trammels on the transference, disposal, or occupancy of land, the better for every one.

It may be averred that circumstances have rendered the position of Ireland so peculiar, that there can be no analogy betwixt it and Great Britain. We entertain grave doubts on this point. The state of affairs in Donegal and some other parts of Ireland does not differ materially from what prevails in some of the western isles of Scotland. There, within these few years, we have seen the direst poverty and misery, as a result of precisely the same causes as in Ireland—namely, a habitual dependence on crofts, or small patches of wild land, supplemented in some instances by fishing; and when both sources of subsistence fail, starvation is only averted by doles of oatmeal. It has lately been noticed in the newspapers that in some parts of Skye, charitable relief of this kind was required by the crofters. This does not surprise us. The poor inhabitants live as their forefathers did in centuries long gone by. And so they will remain struggling with starva-

tion, while they continue to speak nothing but Gaelic, and rely for subsistence on the paltry patches of land they are allowed to occupy on the bare sea-margins, and still more bleak hill-sides.

What the English as a nation have done for the spread of civilisation, is well known. Their 'self-reliant and prosperous colonies are found in every clime. We must be excused, however, for saying that in one respect the English have been remarkably deficient. They have neglected or mismanaged the fragmentary relics of an ancient people at their own doors. The consequence is painfully observable. Within the sphere of the United Kingdom are found stretches of country where the inhabitants know nothing of the English tongue, or English habits of thought. Drifting on from generation to generation as occupants of meagre patches of land, without thrift, capital, or knowledge of the world, they live a wretched hand-to-mouth existence, in a style little better than that of the lower animals, their companions in misery, and are ever on the brink of destitution. The failure of some petty crop finishes them. So dire is their condition, so slight their self-respect, that in the day of distress they are contented to accept doles of food, old clothes, or anything. The blame cast upon them is that they live as they please, without the foresight enjoined by English notions of duty. It would be more correct to say that they are helpless and live as they can, as beings who know no better. Fixed to the soil, as it were, by language and traditions, they deserve our sincere sympathy. Remaining where they are, their condition is hopeless.

Some of our readers may have perused the graphic and faithful accounts of the sufferings now endured in the south and north-west of Ireland, as given by the daily press, and it is not necessary to expatiate on the subject. We offer only the following few scraps from a report of the special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* at the beginning of January. He is writing of what he saw along the coast of Donegal, where the people are half fishers, half farmers, the patches of land they occupy being two, three, or four acres. 'For several years past the seasons have been bad, and that of last year meant absolute ruin. Potatoes rotted in the ground, and were dug up as masses of corruption; barley and oats and beans, exposed to untimely Atlantic storms, were levelled with the ground or torn up by the roots; turnips sickened in the sour soil—there they are still, some of them, and a pig would hardly deign to root them up; while the incessant rain made it impossible to lay in a store of turf. As for the fishing industry, the poor people have neither the boats nor the gear requisite for deep-sea fishing in winter, and so they are cut off from every means of earning a livelihood. Knowing all this, I was prepared for sad scenes at Kildonay, but even if I had given imagination full play, it could not have conjured up those which actually met my eyes. Our route lay for some time through a dreary and neglected country, sodden with wet, undrained, and in some cases fast going back to a state of bog. Here and there a larger farmstead than usual, surrounded by well-kept fields, shewed that capital, as well as industry, was at work; but these were very exceptional instances, and only, by contrast, deepened the prevailing melancholy.'

By-and-by he comes to a kind of village or hamlet. 'The first cabin into which I went was a place that an Englishman would think too bad for his pig. Its floor, of earth and stones, reeked with damp, and water even stood in the hollows; the only furniture was a few cups and saucers, a stool or two, and as many tubs and pots; in one corner a mass of dirty straw had evidently been used as a bed, and on the wretched hearth smoked rather than burned an apology for a fire. The man of the house—shoeless and coatless, pale and haggard—sat idle upon a bag of Indian meal, beyond which his food resources did not go, and through the gloom around the hearth—there was no window to speak of—could be dimly made out one or two crouching female figures. I never saw anything in the way of a home in a civilised country—and I have seen a good deal—more appalling than this. Yet here was the case of a man renting three acres of land, and usually getting what he would be content to call a living out of them. Now, alas! he and thousands of others like him have reached the end of their miserable last season's crop, and beyond them but a little way lies starvation.

'Not far from this, I was shewn by my melancholy attendants into an equally wretched hovel, where a widow with seven young children was fighting the bitter battle of life, and rapidly getting worsted in the struggle. She herself had gone out gathering what she could of stuff to make a fire wherewith to cook the family dinner, consisting—O my brothers in comfortable English homes—of a single cabbage! But the poor little children, half-clothed, thin, and hollow-eyed, were there to plead with heart-rending eloquence for aid. Once more I heard the old story. The land had yielded nothing; no turf could be obtained for fuel short of a journey of eight miles, and the family had touched absolute destitution. Over the way, in another apology for a dwelling-place, I found three poor women trying to kindle a fire with damp bean-stalks, their only crop, in order to cook a dish of Indian meal, their only food. Another and another house I visited—but why describe over and over again a uniformly dark and dismal picture?'

It is to this, then, that the social condition of large stretches of country in Ireland, and in a scarcely modified degree in some parts of Scotland, has been brought through the inveterately maintained practice of endeavouring to draw a subsistence from small portions of unimproved moorland. The whole is obviously wrong, an anachronism at this advanced stage of history. It should have been put an end to, or at least discontinued, long ago. Instead of this, it has been fostered, and absolutely applauded by persons affecting to speak as philanthropists or statesmen. Peasant proprietorship, or occupancy in perpetuity, has been represented as the proper cure for the ills under which Ireland unfortunately labours. In other words, that there ought to be an extension and confirmation of a system which, looking to results, has wrought indescribable mischief, and is very deeply to be deplored. Against this, every reflecting individual, we think, will set his face, as either fraught with confiscation of the rights of property, or the purchase of these rights at the national expense, with the certainty of perpetuating in an aggravated form a species of

land tenure that is synonymous with mental decrepitude and beggary.

For the hapless condition into which certain districts have lapsed, there seems to be but one feasible remedy, comprehensive in its operation. The land should be cleared of its superfluous population; and then, by means of drainage, planting for the sake of shelter, and other improving processes of a costly nature, rendered fit for cultivation or grazing on a large remunerative scale. In the execution of such works, probably there would be employment for many of the resident inhabitants; but for all who are not required, emigration is the proper outlet. On no account, should attempts at peasant occupancy be resumed. A good deal has been done in the Highlands, both mainland and isles, to reclaim the lands and meliorate the climate, followed by the substitution of large for small holdings. Hence, the immensely improved sheep-farming and grazing that have taken place, as is observable by the vast quantities of sheep and fat cattle that are now brought to market. All such territorial improvements have been effected by the land-proprietors, assisted in some instances by loans from government, which are extinguished by annual payments, within a limited number of years. What has thus been done in Scotland, may be done in Ireland, if landlords do their duty and know their own interests. Ireland, however, can already offer examples of improving landlords, as well as either England or Scotland; and the methods of reclaiming bogs and initiating store-farming on a suitable scale have only to be introduced into those parts of the country still lying in a state of nature.

The removal of families from spots to which they cling even in the depths of destitution, may not be without difficulty; but by kindly consideration and assistance, and by taking things gradually, all troubles may be overcome. At any rate, we know of no alternative. On the one hand, by remaining in the old country, are starvation and frequent appeals for public charity. On the other hand, by removing to new homes in the western states of America, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand, there are prospects of well-requited industry and comfort. In his book recently issued, Judge Bathgate explicitly tells us that the wage of a labouring man in New Zealand is eight shillings a day. How preposterous, then, does it appear that people should prefer to stay in a poverty-stricken country, perishing for want, when at comparatively small trouble and expense they could reach a place abounding in means for enjoying every earthly blessing.

The facilities now offered for transferring large numbers to new settlements waiting their arrival are so complete, that emigration has more the character of a pleasure excursion than anything else. There is, of course, the pang of departure; but the whole history of man is a history of the migration of races and changes of situation, impelled by urgent necessity or some other controlling circumstance. The very Celtic people who claim our compassion are not indigenous to the soil. They are the descendants of bands of emigrants from Central Asia, who, ages ago, landing in these islands, dispossessed a prehistoric race, now forgotten, or dimly known by researches among sepulchral mounds and monoliths. Facts

of this kind should be eminently suggestive and consoling. The destiny of man is movement, ever advancing onward and upward. Excelsior! Fixture to a spot is apt to degenerate into stagnation. It is, indeed, only through impulses to improve in circumstances, or to benefit in health, that the surface of the earth is to be eventually peopled. We never hear of a shipload of gallant emigrants leaving our shores without connecting the incident with the great migratory hosts in the days of old, for the same impelling influences are at work. With these sentiments, we must deprecate those fanciful and unwholesome schemes which would fix down men to the soil and perpetuate the conditions incidental to peasant proprietorship. W. C.

## A LIFE'S ATONEMENT.

BY D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

### CHAPTER XVII.—HISTORY.

'It's ninety-eight pound ten,' said the rueful man.

HERE let the Muse who guides this chronicle introduce to the reader the host of the *Spotted Dog* in Bloomsbury. Mr James Groves had by nature no more right to a place in a romance or a tragedy than the Derby Dog to gambol in the Elysian Fields. He was a pale and pimpled young man, of weedy growth, and his hair and eyebrows were of a faint primrose colour. He was great in the matter of pins and scarfs and fancy waistcoats. His father had been a pugilist, and had fulfilled the ordinary fate of gentlemen of his profession, who being first over-trained, are afterwards not trained at all, and settling down in a public-house to enjoy the *otium cum dignitate* of their lives, take to drinking, and so sink to an unheroic close. With such an ancestry—it might be invidious to trace it further—Mr James Groves might naturally be regarded as an authority on sporting matters. Many matches, of all sorts and for amounts large and small, were made in his house, and the *Spotted Dog* was indeed the chief rendezvous of the sporting contingent in London. I have indicated that Mr Groves was not by nature intended for a place in written romance or tragedy. But one man in his life plays many parts. The heavy-villain of real life has little in common with his prototype of the lending-library and the theatre. Poor old King Lear lets you know when you spend an hour with him that the convulsions of a kingdom have brought about the hanging of the court fool along with other matters. Fate pitchforks people about in an inexplicable way, giving this foolish youngster a place in a tragedy, and that venerable philosopher a part in a farce.

It befell that on the morning of the day on which Frank Fairholt wandered in desperation on to Hampstead Heath, and stood there lonely and half-mad in the rain, Mr James Groves arose and adorned himself with much jewellery; and drove in a high dog-cart in the society of two congenial spirits to the *Spaniard's Inn*, a hostel known to fame, and celebrated in the fiction of that chaste and elegant author the late Lord Lytton. Here the trio bestowed the high-stepping steed and the dog-cart; and after refreshing themselves with certain liquids, they took their unostentatious way to the house of a gentleman in the near neighbourhood. This gentleman lived



for no other end than 'sport,' and was one of those peculiarly constituted people who find their keenest pleasure in witnessing the combats of the lower animals. That is the formula. But for fear of misconstruction, I should have preferred to say the higher animals. The egotisms of humanity shall, however, be respected; and although I have my own opinion as to the relative values of this gentleman's life and those of the rats, dogs, and birds he induced to slay each other, there is no need to impress it on my reader.

There may have been perhaps a score of sporting gentlemen around the cockpit when our trio arrived at it. The brutal restrictions of British law even in those days were extended to the manly sport of cock-fighting, and considerable care was taken by the gentleman at whose house the present 'main' was held, to shroud their pleasure in the profoundest secrecy. No interruption befell the refined enjoyment of the day. Mr James Groves, an admitted authority upon the matter in hand, found many people who were rash enough to bet with him, and having netted a considerable sum of money, was in unusually high-feather. When the main was over, and the greater part of the witnesses had quietly dispersed, Mr Groves and his friends stayed and had luncheon with their host. In the course of the luncheon, Mr Groves launched out in enthusiastic praises of the high dog-cart—which was a new product of the art of Long Acre—and of the high-stepping mare, which had been purchased by the lamented Groves senior, a notable judge of horse-flesh, and was famed for having repeatedly trotted a mile in some quite incredibly small number of seconds. These things to hear did the host of Groves Junior seriously incline, and being blessed with the two things which Groves Junior most admired in others—money and credulity, namely—burned to possess the marvel of a dog-cart and the high-stepping mare of fabulous achievement. This flame of desire being artfully fanned by Mr Groves's friends, and Mr Groves himself declaring with much emphasis that he would sooner be boiled alive than part with either of those his properties, the host determined upon an ocular inspection of them; and despatched his own groom to the inn with orders to bring the matchless mare and unprecedented dog-cart round. This done, he inspected them both with the aspect of a profound connoisseur; and by way of establishing his own cunning in the matter of horse-flesh and dog-carts, admired the pair so highly, that Mr Groves was at length compelled, with many sounding asseverations of his sorrow, to part with them at something like twice their highest value. A formal receipt was drawn up and signed, a cheque handed over, and the transfer was complete.

'And now,' said Mr Groves, 'how am I a-goin' to get 'ome, my pippings?'

This query accorded well with the host's simple ideas of humour, and he laughed loud and long. Mr Groves with great geniality joined in the laughter; but his friends, who had not especially profited by this transaction, 'relucted,' as the Great Essayist puts it, at the idea of walking home.

'I can put two of you fellers up here,' said the master of the house; 'but I can't find room for all three of you.'

Mr Groves had an important engagement at a

most absurdly early hour in the morning, and must go home that night. Would the host let his groom drive him over?—'No; he wouldn't,' said the host, and added humorously: 'Let him walk. It would do his legs good.'

'I'll tell you what we'll do, Grove,' said one of Mr Groves's friends. 'Bobby and me'll stop here to-night; but we'll walk with you as far as the top of the Spaniard's Lane, and there you're bound to be able to get an 'ackney-coach, you know.'

This programme was accepted; and in the lowering dusk, the three set off together. They had not gone far when the rain began to pelt down sharply, and they took refuge at the inn. The rain rather increasing than failing in force, after the space of an hour passed in the consumption of alcoholic liquors, Mr Groves announced himself as 'gettin' a leetle peckish,' and proposed a steak with onions. His companions, who were pretty generally willing to eat or drink at any man's expense, fell in readily with his views, and another hour went by. By this time none of the three felt at all inclined to move.

'You landed a bit on the main, didn't you, Bobby?' asked Mr Groves from his side the fireplace.

'Five flimsies,' his friend responded sententially.

'What did you fetch out of the pit?' asked Mr Groves of his other companion.

'Oh,' said he carelessly, stirring his grog as he spoke and sipping at it, 'I won about twelve pound.'

'I don't quite know what I won,' said Mr Groves; 'I'll see.' And suiting the action to the word, he drew his chair up to the table, and produced a little chamois-leather bag containing gold and notes, and throwing this on the table, where it fell with a pleasant muffled jingle, he began to count its contents.

Whilst that gambling, horse-chanting, cock-fighting trio sat over whisky-and-water at the hospitable fireside of *The Spaniard's*, one solitary and melancholy figure plashed about the roads of the heath in the darkness and the rain. For poor Frank, the pillars of the world were shaken, and chaos had come again because of the want of a trifle less than a hundred pounds. Emotions in a nature like his are very changeable, and he had come now to a blind angry rage at Fate who had thus cruelly waylaid him. How bitter and how hard it was, you may partly guess. His penitence had been sincere, his reform earnest, his struggle with the worse half of himself severe and constant. He had striven honestly after virtue, had banished his besetting sin of idleness, and had crowned himself publicly with hard-earned laurels; and here and now in the very flush of his triumph and the confidence of his hope, his dead vice and folly came to life again, and laid their hands thus heavily upon him. He saw father and brother and lover broken-hearted; his delicate vanity heard already how the town rang with his disgrace. Then he could bear the thought of these things no longer; he fell into a dull desperation, and in that mood tramped on through mud and rain until he came suddenly upon a gleam of light, and seeing that he stood before an inn, bethought him suddenly of how tired and wet he

was, and so entered. He called for a glass of hot brandy-and-water, and threw his wet coat and dripping wide-awake over a chair by the fire.

'Will you walk in here, sir?' said the landlord, throwing open a door.

Frank accepted the invitation; and entering the room, saw three men standing at a table, two of them laughing, and one somewhat ruefully regarding a quantity of gold and two or three notes which lay before him.

'Well, *now*, how much is it, Jimmy?' asked one of them.

'Why, it's ninety-eight pound ten,' said the rueful man, with an exclamation which need not be chronicled.

Ninety-eight pounds ten? Those words had been ringing in Frank's ears all day. After his exposure to the rain and his long tramp in the darkness, he felt a little dazed and dream-like on his sudden entry to the warmth and light of the room. The sough of the wind and the plash of the rain and the noise of his own monotonous footsteps were yet in his ears. He was scarcely certain that his fancy had not played some trick upon him in the repetition of this haunting phrase. But he had scarcely seated himself when the man repeated it ruefully. 'I'd have bet twenty to one,' he said, 'that there was a hundred pound there.'

'Well,' said one of his companions, 'you *did* bet two to one as there was a hundred pound there. Hand over a couple of sovs.—Thankee.'

'Hand over,' said the third man laughingly.

The loser paid both claimants from his purse. 'I'll carry this here ninety-eight pound ten home as I got it, anyway,' he said; and raked the money towards him, and bestowed it in his chamois-leather bag. 'Oh, you fellers can grin as much as you like; but I've done a pretty good day's work, takin' it altogether. I've made pretty near a couple o' hundred out of that little bargain, my boys, and I pulled ninety-eight pound ten out of the cock-fight?'

'Sh!' said another, looking across at Frank.

Mr Groves was somewhat inflamed by liquor, and chose to be very loud and lordly over this interruption. 'Look here, Mister "Sh!"' said he, with semi-drunken importance, mimicking his companion. 'I'm a-takin' it for granted as I'm a-talkin' among gentlemen; an' if any gentleman over-ears me a-remarkin' as I've won ninety-eight ten to-day on a cock-fight, why, so he may, and welcome. I don't suppose as anybody here is a-going to lay a criminal information; but if anybody is, why, my name's Jimmy Groves, and I'm the landlord o' the *Spotted Dog* in Bloomsbury, and what I say I stick to.'

'Oh, all right!' said the other, shrugging his shoulders deprecatingly. 'Say what you like.'

'Well,' said Mr Groves, elaborately desirous to justify himself, 'I'll leave it *with* the gentleman. If a man's won ninety-eight ten on a cock-fight, and he says so, fair an' square an' plain, without palaver, mind you, what's the odds? I didn't say wheer the cock-fight was—did I, stupid? I leave it to the gentleman.—Did I say wheer the cock-fight was, sir?'

Thus accosted, poor Frank responded that the gentleman seemed to him to have spoken most discreetly, and to be admirably worthy of his high good-fortune. This speech, which fed the bitter-

ness of his own heart, put Mr Groves into a great state of good-humour, and he refought the great encounter—'main,' as it is termed by the sporting fraternity—of the morning, whilst Frank sickened at him. Whilst he sat there and heard this drunken cad relate his brutal story, the young man thought how wild was the fashion in which Fortune distributed her gifts. Frank looked at this pimpled and bejewelled young publican, and felt very bitterly towards him. 'This howling drunkard,' he thought as he looked at him, 'has made to-day, by his presence at that degrading spectacle, the very sum of money the want of which will be my ruin at noon to-morrow. One can hardly believe in Providence, in the face of it.' Frank became half-frightened at his own thoughts, so dark they grew. He called for more brandy, and drank it; then passed into the outer room, put on his overcoat and hat, and went out into the darkness and the rain again. He tramped along slowly, so wretchedly absorbed that he scarce knew where he went. He filled and lit his pipe mechanically, and coming to a gate, threw his elbows on it and lounged there unconscious of the night, or not caring for it, and smoked as he looked across the gloomy fields.

As he leaned there, he heard loud voices coming up the lane, startling the dreary night with tuneless song. *We won't go Home till Morning* refused to blend with *Auld Lang Syne* and *The Bay of Biscay*. Frank, half-hoping that they would go by in company, and save him from the demon who tempted him, drew nearer to the hedge at the side of the gate, and stood still there. The voices and the footsteps ceased awhile, and then he could hear the murmurs of conversation. Then two voices went away, and one came nearer, unmusically roaring, 'For he's a jolly good fellow.' As the owner of the lonely voice came on and reeled past the gate, Frank knew him for the man who had been boasting of his winnings. 'That blackguard,' thought Frank, 'has in his pocket the very money which would save my whole life. Would it be theft to take it from him, and send it back when my cheque comes? I know who he is, and where he lives. It would save me, and do him no harm.' Thus the demon tempted him. 'Bah!' said Frank; 'I haven't the pluck for it. I can do any amount of filibustering in fancy, but I let the chance go by.' Up to that second of time he had only feared that he might be tempted, and had speculated on what he would do if he were. Now, as if some irresistible hand impelled him, he dashed on at full speed after the stumbling drunkard in front, and coming up with him, in half a minute laid a hand upon him. The man supposing it to be one of his late companions, hiccuped 'Hillo!'

'Listen to me!' said Frank.

'And who are you?' asked the other with an oath, reeling from beneath Frank's grasp and throwing himself into an attitude for defence.

'I am a desperate man,' said Frank. 'You have money about you that I want. I don't mean to rob you. I know who you are and where you live, and I will send the money back again to you; but I *will* have it now. Give me the bag with ninety-eight pounds ten in it.'

'Stand off,' said the landlord of the *Spotted Dog*, 'or I'll blow your brains out! D'ye think I travel down a lane like this without pistols?'

He made a pretence of feeling in his breast-pocket; and in that instant Frank sprang upon him and brought him to the ground. He lay dead-still; and with a frantic haste and horror such as no words can tell, the abandoned madman searched for the bag and found it and dashed away. He then leaped the hedge, and ran in a blind and maddening terror across the fields. It was not the dread of anything that might pursue that urged him onward. His fear dwelt within. His abhorrence of the deed before it was fairly done was a thing that language cannot deal with. There is no such Tophet elsewhere as any man may create within the depths of his own soul. He was bound for ever beyond hope of release to himself, that vile footpad who had just struck down the helpless man in the road behind, and he shuddered at that hideous companionship, and shrank from it with inexpressible loathing. Such a hopeless gulf arose between his present self and that happy misery of five minutes since, that as he ran he sobbed and waited to think of it. He had not been running for twenty seconds when, with an access of remorse and terror, he stopped and turned, and hurled the bag away from him with all his strength. Then he ran once more like a madman until breath and strength failed him together, and drove him to the ground.

When he came to himself, the rain had ceased, and a watery moon was shining. He arose weakly, and knew the place in which he found himself. Like a man in a dream, he walked homeward, dragging one weary foot after the other. He was three miles from the scene of his crime, when a cab came rumbling by, and he hailed it, and ordered the cabman to drive him to the square nearest to his rooms. When he reached them, he found the house in darkness, except for his own sitting-room, in which a lamp was burning. He entered, and was surprised to find nothing changed. A whole unfathomable gulf of time lay between him and the hour at which he had left the place. He looked on his table for letters, as a phantom returning to the place known in the flesh might do things once familiar. He opened them, and regarded their contents with almost an added misery. All had been well if he had but suffered that little trouble patiently. It seemed quite a puny trouble now in comparison with this awful companionship with himself, which must be endured for ever. The decanter of brandy from which he had poured a glass before going out was still upon the table. He seized a tumbler, and helped himself plentifully. Then he took the lamp into his bedroom, undressed, and got into bed. The brandy and his fatigue sent him to sleep, and he lay in heavy forgetfulness until the sun was high.

He awoke with a sense of rest and ease, and stretched his arms luxuriously. But the terror which waited for his awaking dropped down upon him as swift as light, and oppressed his soul with anguish. Through it all, with a strange automatic exactness, he went through the usual routine of his toilet, bath'd and dressed, and wound his watch, and then rang for breakfast, and even ate a little. Next he called for a cab, and drove to the bank with Benjamin Hartley's cheque. He opened an account there, and drew one hundred and fifty pounds in notes and a hundred pounds in gold. It was strange to

himself how his thoughts seemed to float on the surface of that fiery sea of remorse which lay burning in him. He looked a little ill and tired, he thought, when he regarded himself in the glass. Could such misery look so unconcerned? he wondered. Could men carry such tragedies as his about the town and not declare them in their looks? What numberless horrors there might be in the world, unguessed of! He drove to Tasker's place in Acre Buildings, and found the office boy alone. The lad said his master had not yet come; and Frank waited there, and read the paper the boy gave him, and read understandingly and with interest, whilst that vast sea within lay burning him, and the knowledge of his sin and the eternal presence of his remorse were with him all the time. By-and-by a fellow-countryman of Tasker's came in excitedly, and told the story of the previous night, and stated that Tasker had recovered sufficiently from the first shock of the attack to send for him and to give him a power of attorney; and that he, the fellow-countryman, whose name was Schmidt, was ready to do any business in behalf of Mr Tasker. He had already been to the police station and received the documents found upon his friend's person—amongst them Frank's bill for ninety-eight pounds ten shillings, which he now delivered. Frank paid over a hundred pounds in notes, received his change, put the bill in his pocket-book, drove home, and there burned that fatal paper. He sat awhile after this, and then bethinking him of certain jewellery which he had of late been compelled to pawn, he sought out the tickets, and walked to the pawnbroker's and redeemed them. When he had gone, for the first time, thither, he had walked shamefacedly up and down the street in the dusk; but now, memory left him no room for any smaller thought, and he went into the house unconcernedly and emerged with boldness, with the recovered rings already upon his fingers. He returned home, and again sat vacant for a while, and then rising, he took a towel, and looking carefully over it to see that it was unmarked, he laid within it the hundred pounds in gold, and putting it into a cigar-box, sealed it carefully, using a half-crown as a seal. He wrapped the box neatly in brown paper, and putting the parcel into a small travelling-bag, laid it on one side awhile, and walked the streets, and met friends and acquaintances, and talked with them. Some of them remarked that he looked unwell, and he answered that he had been a little worried. So the day passed in idle routine, and the inward tragedy went on. All ambitions, all purities, all innocent pleasures and sweet hopes were dead—drowned in that inward sea of fire. A score of times when the common vacuities of the day failed him, the pain of remorse came with so intense an agony upon him that he could have cried aloud.

He dined at the old Club. Food and wine were flavourless. He went home when the night had fallen, and took up the black travelling-bag, which bore nothing to indicate its owner, and walked by devious ways towards Bloomsbury. In a by-street in Soho he came upon a ticket-porter, who stood alone at the door of a little public-house with a pewter pot in his hand.

'Will you do an errand for me?' Frank asked.

'Yessir,' said the man, and bustled into the

house with the pewter pot, and returned wiping his lips.

'Take that,' said Frank, 'to the *Spotted Dog* in Bloomsbury.—Do you know it?'

'O yessir,' said the ticket-porter.

'Say the gentleman who borrowed it in *Spaniard's Lane* last night has sent it back again.'

'Any name, sir?'

'No.—Yes, Thomson.'

Frank gave the man a shilling, and he shuffled off. Frank also, bearing his haunting pain with him, went away, and rambled listlessly about the streets. Finally he went home wearily, and slept a horrible disturbed sleep, full of awful faces and night-fears unseen, and sudden gulfs that opened for him, and seas that drowned him, or floated some ghastly thing up to him slowly out of the depths. He arose in the morning, had his bath, and dressed, and rang for breakfast. The girl who waited upon him lingered a little.

'Do you want anything, Mary?' he asked.

'Why, no sir,' said the girl. 'But you're looking very ill yesterday and to-day, Mr Fairholt; and if you'll forgive me for saying so, sir, I think you'd better see a doctor.'

Everybody had loved the young fellow, and his kindly generous jollity had enlisted Mary's sympathies these past two years. He dismissed her fears lightly; but she went away with a shake of the head, to indicate that she held her own opinion. Frank toyed languidly with his breakfast for a time, and then opened the paper. And there out of the printed page this struck him like a blow—'Murder and Robbery in Spaniard's Lane.'

### TRAMWAYS.

THE practical application of the tramway system took place in the United States, where the straightness and regularity of the streets offer many facilities for such a system. An American—Mr Train—primarily constructed tramways in London, in three or four localities. But he was beset with difficulties from first to last; vested interests combined to baffle him; parish and county authorities, omnibus companies, cab owners and drivers, carriers and carters, all joined in the opposition; and the public were not sufficiently familiar with the conveniences of the system to espouse the cause of the projector.

Tramway companies have been established by degrees, first in the metropolis, then in many parts of the United Kingdom. It belongs to the history of railways to trace the manner in which George Stephenson and other clever men, taking the tramway as their basis, gradually developed the truly mighty railway system. Had it not been for the invention and continued improvement of the locomotive, railways would only have been a kind of superior tramway.

We may incidentally say a few words concerning that curious modification known as the *Wire Tramway*, invented and introduced by Mr Hodgson the engineer. It is in effect a suspended tramway, the rails being over the cars or trucks instead of under them, and running along an elevated wire instead of on the solid ground. The wire, or rather wire-rope, is upheld by posts or poles; and by a most ingenious application of

mechanism the trucks travel along unimpeded by the summits of the posts. If the posts are made of various heights, the wire-rope can be carried across wide valleys or deep ravines without touching the ground. The wire-rope is kept continually moving from end to end by the tractive power of stationary engines. The gradients of the wire or rope are so regulated that the ascent of empty trucks just counterbalances the descent of those laden with minerals. These singular tramways avoid the expense of cuttings and embankments, and that of bridges and viaducts over rivers and deep hollows; they occupy scarcely any land; they are not affected by floods or snow; and they can be readily removed from place to place. Yet, notwithstanding these advantages, the system has commercially failed—in this country at all events. The idea had been to employ the wire tramways to transport slate, stone, and other minerals from quarries and mines to towns and shipping-ports; but the working expenses, chiefly for steam-power, have proved to be too heavy to leave a sufficient margin of profit.

Let us now return to our real tramways. Like Mr Hodgson's system, they dispense with bridges, viaducts, embankments, tunnels, and deep cuttings; but they have difficulties of their own to battle with. The rails must be made of such a form as not materially to interfere with the wheels of ordinary street vehicles, and at the same time so laid as to give a safe groove for the wheels of the passenger cars. These cars are longer, broader, and loftier than the wretched omnibuses that continue to disgrace the metropolis; more comfortable to the passengers inside, better provided with stairs of steps for outside passengers to reach the roof, and easier for ingress and egress to all. The tramways are, in fact, decided favourites with the public; and this will gradually enable the companies to overcome alike commercial and mechanical difficulties.

At present, however, the problem of the mode of traction is a difficult one. The cars are usually drawn by two horses abreast. Where the streets are level, this species of traction is not particularly objectionable; for the animals are not severely tasked. In all cases, however, where the thoroughfares are less or more on an incline, the drawing of the cars is attended with difficulties which it is painful to witness. In such cities, for example, as Edinburgh, which is built on a group of hills, with heavy ascents, the traction by animal power, even when three horses are employed, cannot merit approval. The heavy expenditure on horse-flesh is another matter of serious concern. Many of the tramway companies have succeeded in establishing and organising so large a trade, that they have surmounted the results of this heavy drag upon their resources, and realise fairly good dividends. Nevertheless, the use of some more economical mode of traction—one that shall alleviate the merciless work which in certain districts is assigned to the poor horses—continues to be a problem of serious importance to them all alike.

Can tramway cars be drawn by steam-power through the streets of a busy town without danger to foot-passengers or to horses and vehicles engaged in ordinary traffic? It is known that more than a century ago an engineer invented and constructed a steam-carriage for transporting



heavy articles to short distances. Next after him came Trevithick, Murdoch, and several other English inventors, who one by one introduced numerous improvements in the same direction. The first steam-carriage actually used for conveying passengers, invented by Griffiths, made its appearance in 1812, but was soon abandoned on account of its deficiency in steam-generating power. Next came Burstall, Gordon, Gurney, Anderson, and James, who severally displayed an almost inexhaustible fund of ingenuity in devising new forms of carriage and improved modes of employing steam-power. Gurney made the nearest approach to success, seeing that some of his steam-carriages attained a speed of twenty miles an hour on common rough roads. But this was about the year 1830, when the railway system was beginning to display some of its great capabilities; and the new competitor seriously affected the road-locomotive. Not killing it, however; for Dance, Ogle, Macerone, Church, Maudslay, and above all Hancock, continued to labour in the same direction for several years longer. The Americans carried on experiments of the same kind, and in 1859 placed a locomotive on one of their tramways. Ingenuity was not confined to the use of steam; seeing that compressed air and ammoniacal gas engines were in succession tried, but not with satisfactory results. England and Scotland followed suit by the placing on short lines of tramway various forms of locomotive invented by Perkins, Grantham, Merryweather, Hughes, and other clever mechanical engineers, professional or amateurs.

It appears, from inquiries made by a Parliamentary Committee, that the legislature has had much to do with the frustration of plans for using steam or other locomotives on tramways. A statute has been passed, bearing relation to the use of such a mode of traction on common roads, but it is also found to affect tramways. The desire of the companies to introduce steam is very urgent, due to the expense and waste of horses already mentioned. The Secretary of the Edinburgh Tramway Company informed the Committee that though they purchased good horses at good prices, provided the best fodder and the best stabling arrangements, yet the horses are severely tried, and speedily become worn out. The Committee say in their Report: 'This evidence is entirely corroborated by the experience of the London General Omnibus Company. The Company owns nearly eight thousand horses; and in addition to its own vehicles, supplies horse-power to some of the tramways. The horses are usually bought at about the age of five years; and the average life of a horse after that time, if drawing an omnibus, is four years and a half, or four years only if drawing a tram-car. It follows thus, that in the work of this Company alone sixteen or seventeen hundred horses are broken down every year. Of these no less than one thousand are sent at once to the knacker's yard; while the rest are sold at the hammer for what they will fetch, usually at an average price of nine or ten pounds. Common humanity therefore loudly demands some other motive-power than that of horses.'

Do the horses attached to other vehicles manifest any symptoms of fright at the strange puffing fiery monster passing along the streets and roads?

The answers to this question remind us of the old saying, 'When doctors disagree,' &c. Some witnesses state that horses, even in crowded thoroughfares, appear to be almost wholly indifferent; others hold a contrary opinion, and express serious alarm at the prospect of the introduction into the streets of a new motive-power. This diversity of opinion is most striking in the case of the witnesses who have watched with interest the working of a steam-car upon one of the tramways in Paris. The steam-car has been running over a length of three to four miles, from the Bastille to the Mont Parnasse Railway station; it passes about six thousand horses daily, besides cavalry, and horses brought to a fair in the vicinity. During the period of its running, says one witness, 'not a single member of the public has been killed or wounded; but several accidents have occurred, and in one instance an omnibus was overturned. Much depends on the nature of the traffic; whilst a real public advantage may be obtained at no risk where the roads are wide and the passing horses are chiefly employed in drawing cabs, omnibuses, and carts.' Our own experience leads to the conclusion that the fears sometimes entertained on this matter are exaggerated.

The Committee, after considering the facts and suggestions brought before them, recommend in their Report that all reasonable facilities should be afforded by the legislature and the Board of Trade, with due regard to the convenient arrangements of the tram locomotives—in most instances the steam-engine forming part of the car itself—to protect and conceal the engine and its boiler from view; to keep the cars free from unpleasant noise, heat, and smell; to obtain free ingress and egress for the passengers without hindrance from the machinery; to make the engine consume its own smoke and noxious vapours as much as possible; to supply amply sufficient brake-power; to furnish the engine with a bell or some kind of warning; to keep the maximum speed at eight miles an hour in towns and twelve miles an hour in the open country—these are the recommendations made by the Committee.

As to the total mileage of tramway in the United Kingdom, little definite can be said. Not for want of statistical returns; but because the carrying out of the several schemes is so very uncertain. No Act of Parliament is necessary. If the consent of municipal, parochial, district, and county authorities be obtained, the Board of Trade issues the regulation orders, and the construction of the tramway may commence. We say *may*, seeing that many a hitch is likely to occur. Sometimes the projectors or promoters of the scheme cannot get the public or the capitalists to take shares or advance the money; especially at times when the financial prospects of the country are under a cloud. Sometimes the Company arrive at a conclusion that the route chosen is not the best that could be found; they abandon it, and have to apply for other powers *de novo*. Sometimes they construct only a small part of the length for which they possess powers, and either abandon or indefinitely postpone the rest. But the tram system has taken hold of the public favour, and is sure to triumph over all obstacles. Setting aside the vast metropolis: when we are told that Edinburgh, with only six or eight per cent. as

many inhabitants, has carried some millions of tramway passengers in a year, we may well look forward to a successful future career for the system.

### THE EVICTION:

AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

IN TEN CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

I BELONG to the Whartons of Westchester. The branch of the family with which I am immediately connected has never been by any means the wealthiest; and as I was born the youngest of five sons, there was not much for me to look forward to in the way of patrimony. However, my parents did the best in their power for me; they gave me a good preliminary education, and when I had arrived at the age of twenty-one they sent me to Oxford. There, unfortunately, my studies were of a very unpractical nature; in fact, I developed no taste whatever for entering upon a profession. When the time came for leaving college, I had no reason to congratulate myself on my position or prospects; for, save a small legacy, I found myself with absolutely nothing to fall back upon. Thereupon, acting on the principle that 'greater evils medicine the less,' I married a penniless wife. Married for love, without being able to afford it! True it was that the family into which I had married was closely related to that of the Earl of Mahon, and we had hopes that he would exert himself on our behalf. But two years of our married life passed away, and our second child had already been born before any signs of the expected favour appeared.

At last the opportunity came. Mr Carnegie, the agent for many years of the Earl of Mahon's property in Westmeath, Ireland, had died suddenly. By the kindness of his lordship, I was at once accorded the vacant post, despite the fact that a large number of well-qualified men had sent in applications for it. The decease of Mr Carnegie, falling as it did upon the annual rent-day itself, had thrown the business of the estate into considerable confusion. Accordingly, I received instructions from my noble patron to cross over to Ireland forthwith. My wife had not yet recovered completely from her late confinement; with cheerfulness, however, she expedited the preparations for my departure, promising to follow after me as soon as circumstances and her health would allow. The second day after I had received notice of the appointment, I was *en route* for Ireland, a country which I now visited for the first time.

On my arrival there I posted direct for Castle Mahon. It was a fine old baronial hall, the residence of the Mahon family whenever any of its members were minded to visit their Irish estates. But the country swarms with absentees, as an Irish wit has expressed it; and the Earls of Mahon were no exception to the rule. The establishment shewed traces of this neglect. Intrusted to the tender mercies of a care-taker, it had an air of all-pervading mouldiness; environed by gloomy woods, in which the woodman's axe had long ceased to ring, it seemed the very abode of solitude and melancholy. However, I had neither time nor inclination for indulging in such reflections; and the sight of the bailiff of the estate, who, with the housekeeper and a groom, was at the entrance to receive me, soon recalled my

mind to a sense of business. The bailiff was there to obtain instructions from me, and to deliver up certain important papers connected with the management of the estate. I gave him an audience at once; found everything in the main satisfactory; and arranged for the earliest date practicable for the receiving of rents. Business over and the bailiff dismissed, I wrote a cheery letter to my wife, as I knew she had peculiar views about the state of Ireland, which would be apt to unsettle her peace of mind. Thereafter, I addressed myself to a lonely dinner in the dining-hall, and some hours later to a still more lonely couch in the Earl's bed-chamber. It was the first time since my marriage that I had been away from home: I felt unaccountably disquieted and anxious; but I was at anyrate glad that I had written the cheery letter to my wife.

The day appointed for the receiving of rents came round. Michael Donnelly—that was the name of my bailiff—was in attendance, and afforded me much valuable assistance in the task. This he was well qualified to do. Independent of a good share of natural ability, he had also a long practical experience with the working of the estate, having served under Mr Carnegie, my predecessor, in his present capacity for the twelve previous years. But no case that required especial attention occurred during the day; thanks to a good season, the condition of the tenants was unusually flourishing, and the rents were paid up in a most commendable fashion. In the afternoon, however, running my eye down the list, I came upon the name of a defaulter, which I had not observed before that time. At once calling the attention of the bailiff to the matter: 'Donnelly,' said I, 'who is this Patrick Scallan?' He appears to have forgotten that this is rent-day.

'Faix, Mr Wharton,' replied the bailiff, 'he's been forgettin' often an' often these past years undher Mr Carnegie. 'Deed this time twelvemonth we sarved him with a reminder in the shape of a notice to quit. That, av coorse, was all well an' good. Sorra a bit of it put him about; fur though the notice was sarved duly, the niver a bit of notice, saving yer presence, was taken by the same boy.'

'Well, of coorse,' interrupted I, 'when the legal interval had expired, Mr Carnegie put the affair into the hands of the sheriff to get possession?'

'No sir; fur jist afore that time Scallan an' the wife—thee's only the two of them—kem up to the office with a cock-an'-bull story, an' begged him to stay proceedings fur a week longer, an' so an ever since; till at last the poor ould gentleman tuk the inwardly pains that settled him.'

'This must be attended to at once,' said I. 'But perhaps I had better see the folks concerned before we write to the sheriff. What do you think?'

'Twould be a good job, sir, to have thim up here face to face wid yerself an' talk thim over, fur they're slippery folk them same Scallans. Rapscallions is what Mr Carnegie used to tarm thim.'

'Very well,' said I; 'let them know this evening that I want to see them particularly at the office to-morrow.'

'I'll have thim up, sir, an' no mistake; lasteways his wife; fur Scallan himself has been on the booze ever since Sunday week.'

'On the what?' I asked.

'Dhrunk, sir. He'd dhrink the say dhyr. Shure it's between that an' bad company that he's become to be the politishun he is, sir. An' whin he has a dhrup in, he cares jist as much for a madgistrate or an agent as he does for a gobblin' turkey-cock.'

'Well, well; at all events deliver my message. I want to do the best I can for the unfortunate couple.'

#### CHAPTER II.

The message was delivered. To it Scallan made no response in person, as the bailiff had prophesied; but he sent his wife Biddy over with plenipotentiary powers, as his representative. She seemed to be a quiet broken-hearted woman. I gave her a seat, and stated as briefly and clearly as I could the position in which affairs were. Her husband had been nearly two years in arrears of rent, when my predecessor in office served him with a notice to quit. Since that time he had apparently made no effort to rid himself of his difficulties, nor fulfilled certain promises made to Mr Carnegie under the pressure of the sheriff's process. Since I had come into office, I had received several offers for the land from persons who were both able and willing to pay the rent, which indeed was ridiculously low. There was no help for it—the affair must be put into the hands of the sheriff. However, as this was the first case of the kind I had to deal with, and as I did not wish even to seem to deal harshly with them, I was willing to allow them an advance of thirty pounds, to keep them going till they got an opening somewhere. I told her that I should do this on my own responsibility—no legal claim for compensation could be established, as it was a simple case of eviction for non-payment.

Biddy listened with great attention and apparent satisfaction to my harangue. At its conclusion, she said: 'Thank ye kindly, yer honner Mr Wharton, fur spakin' so fair intirely. 'Deed an' word, sir, whin Mick Donnelly kem down last night an' tould me that I was going to be sarved with an injement pross, if the very breath didn't lave me wid fright. Paddy kem in afterwards, an' tould me all about what it was. He'll do whatever ye tell him, but not to expict any rint on the primises; an', thrue for him, there's not twinty shillins' worth about the whole consarn. 'Deed an' 'deed, yer honner, he's jist dhrunk himself out of house an' home, an' left his wife the talk of the country. It wasn't always so wid me, Mr Wharton yer honner; fur I kem of the Maginnisses of Ballybrien, an' there was priests in the family, so there was. An' a sarry day it was for me, a clane daycent Maginnis, to take it into me head to marry a dhyrty Scallan. But yer honner, I was young an' foolish. How-andiver, he was a good man to me whin he kep off the dhrup. An' there was the public-house so handy, axin' him in like to have a glass, as he would say to me. So as I tould him, maybe it's the luckiest job ever happened ye to get clane away from that randyvous an' the dhrinkin' an' the play-actin'. 'Prehaps, Biddy,' sez he to me, "prehaps yer right." So on the spot I settled wid him to go to his brother's in the County Tipperary, who is well to do, an' wants Paddy down there very bad. An' the money ye offer us

—we've no right to it, good or bad; but it would be very welcome jist at present.'

Thus ended the interview. The money was paid over to the unfortunate couple; the legal process was gone through; and the sheriff formally took possession. Scallan and his wife transferred their quarters for the time being to a neighbour's house, whither their furniture, a few wretched sticks, had preceded them. The applicants for the vacant homestead, three in number, formally presented their claims. For one of them, a Scotchman named Nesbitt, I declared a preference, and appointed an early day for settling the matter with him.

Since my arrival, several of the resident gentry of the place had called on me. Among the rest was a Mr Gerald Carnegie, nephew and sole representative of my predecessor in office. He shewed himself very kind, and gave me a warm invitation over to his place. I determined to cultivate his acquaintance; the society of such a man would be not only agreeable, but, for a man circumstanced like me, profitable in the extreme. Towards the latter part of his uncle's life he had taken part in, nay, almost entirely managed the business of the estate. Before he took his leave—he had called on the afternoon of the day that I had been speaking to Nesbitt about taking the farm—I mentioned Scallan's affair to him. He was quite pleased at my conduct in the affair. The fellow, he said, was an arrant ruffian, who had given his poor uncle a great deal of trouble.

'In what respect?' I asked.

'In every way possible. He was constantly in bad company, organising conspiracies and getting up shooting-parties.'

'Shooting-parties!' I echoed. 'That sounds badly for his lordship's preserves.'

'Oh, nothing of that sort,' replied Mr Carnegie, smiling; 'but parties of Ribbonmen, for the purpose of shooting obnoxious bailiffs, agents, and landlords.'

'Merciful powers! he must be a regular villain! I am quite delighted to have rid the estate of him.'

'It is a good job, Mr Wharton; and the neighbouring land-agents should feel deeply indebted to you. I am sure he materially shortened my poor uncle's life by a systematic course of intimidation. When both mind and body become enfeebled, there is a strong temptation to make a truce with villainy; and I'm afraid that was the case with the old gentleman. The fact is, Scallan kept himself quiet; but he was asked for no rent.'

'It was a ruinous principle to go upon,' I remarked.

'That's a fact, and I used to remark the same to my uncle daily. It was no use advising him. There was something in it too—for at any rate the poor old soul died in his bed.'

My visitor dismissed, I went to dinner. A review of the day's proceedings afforded me considerable satisfaction; but this satisfaction was somehow tinged with an uneasiness, caused by the statements which I had heard from Mr Carnegie relative to Scallan's connection with the Ribbon society. After dinner, I felt more secure. But with the evening post came two letters, one from my wife in England, the other from I knew not whom. As a matter of course, I opened my wife's letter first. From it I learned that both

she and the children were much improved, and that she hoped to be able to join me in two or three weeks at the most. She had been reading the account of a murder in Galway, since my departure; how a landlord had been shot by an enraged tenant. Hence she had been very uneasy; but she prayed every night for me beside our children's cot that God would keep me from danger. Then followed a lot of minor details, of no interest to the reader, but of the deepest interest to me, separated from my home for the first time in my life, a stranger in a strange land.

I laid down my wife's letter, and took up the other—a suspicious-looking billet, to say the least of it. It was addressed in a sidelong fashion: 'To WHARTON, Sassenach agint over the Mahon property, Castlemaison.' I tore open the envelope, and plunged into the contents. They were as follows:

Wharton, you villan, this is to let you know that the Boys has had a meatin on you for puttin poor Scallan an' the wife out of there place, an' your to give the same back to thim at waunst. Else prepare your coffin, fur the Boys thinks that the likes of you is not wanted in the County Westmeah. Neglect this warnin at your Perill; an' the next notiss youll have ill be the Death Billet. Sined by me in the preasence of the Boys.—RORY OF THE HILLS.

N.B.—My freandly advise to you is to lave the country intirely. Dhrop the thrade an' quit it.

On the top of the letter was sketched the rude effigy of a coffin; on one side of it, an Irish pike; on the other, a blunderbuss; at its foot, the legend, 'God save Ireland.'

The crisis had come. I threw down the threatening letter upon the table, and leaning back, strove to review my present position calmly. What was I to do? What was going to befall me? Was I to violate my trust, and consent to the dishonourable course proposed to me? Or was I to adhere to my original purpose? which I knew to be the only one in accordance with honesty. In other words, was I to stipulate with ruffians for my life, or were my wife's fears to be realised—that she should soon be left an impoverished widow, and her children helpless orphans? Or was there some third course open to me—was I to fly the country forthwith? I knew not.

#### CLEVER MARRIED WOMEN.

MARRIAGE is much more to a woman than it is to a man; it only forms a part of his life, while it constitutes the whole of hers. Her chief interests centre, or ought to centre in her home. Some of the happiest unions have been where husband and wife have had intellectual tastes in common, as in the cases of Dr and Mrs Somerville, Henry and Sara Coleridge, William and Mary Howitt, Samuel Carter Hall and his wife. It is to women such as these that Wordsworth refers in the following lines:

The reason firm, the temperate will,  
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;  
A perfect woman, nobly planned,  
To warn, to comfort, and command—  
And yet a spirit still, and bright  
With something of an angel light.

In the case of clever women being married to a dull heartless class of men, what can be expected but great unhappiness on both sides. Such, from the method of arranging marriages in France, frequently occurs in that country; the misery being aggravated from the circumstance of there being no means of liberation by divorce. The well-known French novelist who wrote under the name of Georges Sand was married when a young, lively, and pretty girl of seventeen to a man old enough to be her father—we had almost said grandfather—a retired military officer, entirely devoted to amateur farming. He spent the large fortune which he had received with his wife in importing new breeds of sheep and magnificent bulls. In Georges Sand's novel of *Indiana*, one of the characters who closely resembled him is thus described: 'He was a man with a gray moustache and a terrible eye; an austere master, before whom all trembled—wife, servants, horses, and dogs.' The Baroness Dudevant, for that was then her name, endured her uncongenial existence with this man for some years. Two children were born to her, and they for a time a little reconciled her to her fate, but only for a time. One day early in the year 1828 she was missing. She had left her home, determined to seek a happier life elsewhere. She first took refuge in the convent where she had been educated; but soon found that she had only exchanged one kind of captivity for another. Again she took flight; and we next hear of her as inhabiting a garret in one of the streets of Paris, and supporting herself by flower-painting and by writing those novels which have made her name famous. Some time afterwards, Georges Sand entered into a lawsuit with her husband, and obtained a separation from him and the restitution of all her property.

Delphine Gay, another French novelist, was the daughter of a French official in one of the departments, and of his wife Sophie, who was the authoress of a number of works both in poetry and prose. Monsieur Gay was doomed to experience one of the penalties which sometimes attend the possessors of clever wives. Sophie having written a witty sally against a prefect of the department, her husband was deprived of an appointment which he had enjoyed under the victim of his wife's satire. Their daughter Delphine married Monsieur Emile de Girardin the well-known journalist, a really good and conscientious man, but one also whose temper had been soured by early misfortunes. His young, beautiful, and witty wife was as great a favourite in society as he was the reverse. Her rooms were the constant resort of the most celebrated literary characters of the day: Lamartine, Alexandre Dumas, Balzac, Victor Hugo, Méry, Théophile Gautier, Eugène Sue, and sometimes Alfred de Musset. Among all these celebrities it is to be feared that the husband was often forgotten; and though Delphine occasionally met him at dinner, nursed him when he was ill, and was ready at all times to help him out of the difficulties into which his quarrelsome disposition had involved him, he inhabited his own rooms, and never appeared at his wife's receptions.

We hardly read of a single authoress during the middle ages. In those days female education was almost entirely neglected, except in rare instances.



If women possessed talent, they were compelled to hide it. No female novelist worthy of the name appeared in England until the reign of George III. The lady who first had the courage to brave public opinion was Frances Burney, the friend of Garrick and Dr Johnson. Miss Burney remained unmarried until she was nearly forty years of age. Romance is then supposed to exercise a less dominant power; but she nevertheless had the imprudence to espouse Monsieur d'Arblay, a French refugee, whose income consisted only of a precarious annuity of one hundred pounds. The marriage, however, proved a very happy one. Macaulay describes Monsieur d'Arblay as 'an honourable and amiable man, with a handsome person, frank soldier-like manners, and some taste for letters.' The pair did not suffer from poverty; the wife became the bread-winner; and not very long after her marriage her third novel, *Camilla*, was published, by which she is said to have realised over three thousand guineas.

Charlotte Brontë in the zenith of her fame married Mr Nicholls, her father's curate, a thoroughly good conscientious man, but possessing by no means literary tastes. It was the woman not the authoress with whom the hard-working clergyman fell in love, and whom he wished to make his wife, and he would rather have preferred than otherwise that she had not written at all. This fact seemed to add to, not to detract from his wife's happiness. Writing of him to a friend shortly after her marriage, she thus speaks: 'One of the villagers when proposing my husband's health described him as a consistent Christian and a kind gentleman. I own the words touched me deeply; and I thought to merit and win such a character was better than to earn wealth or fame or power.'

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu was a great benefactress to her country, and a very clever and beautiful woman; but she was not quite fitted for domestic life; though, however, she chose to reside abroad while her husband remained in England, they regularly corresponded with each other on the most friendly terms. Mr Edward Wortley Montagu was by no means deficient in talent; he was the intimate friend of Addison, and distinguished himself in parliament as an able and upright politician. He was much older than his wife; and it is very probable that Lady Mary would never have accepted him in spite of his entreaties, had it not been to escape from a most distasteful marriage, into which her father endeavoured to force her. Few young ladies would like to imitate her example, and elope with a man with whom they were not in love; but the high-spirited daughter of Lord Kingston would not be given away against her will.

The life of Angelica Kaufmann, the gifted Swiss artist, was a very romantic one. It has been said that she actually refused the hand of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Whether this is true or not, it is almost certain that while in England she married an adventurer who represented himself as Count Horn, a Swedish nobleman. Her second and last husband was an artist of the name of Zucchi, whom she had known from a child; and the remainder of her life was spent happily with him in Italy.

The beautiful and enthusiastic Manon Philippon, who so distinguished herself by her devotion to

liberty, and her animosity to the monster Robespierre during the French Revolution, married, at the age of twenty-five, Monsieur Roland, an elderly man of reserved manners, and with a grave, harsh countenance; nevertheless, under this unpleasing exterior were concealed sterling qualities. His political opinions were like his wife's; and her literary ability was of great service to him in his capacity of Minister of the Interior. He entertained for her the greatest affection and esteem; but his love was so selfish and domineering, that he expected her every feeling to yield to it. To this tyranny she submitted without a murmur. Madame Roland was one of the many victims of the Revolution. She perished on the scaffold. A few days afterwards, her husband was found quite dead, leaning against the trunk of a tree, with a paper pinned on his breast. This paper, after explaining who he was, went on to say: 'Whoever thou art that findest me lying here, respect my remains; respect them as those of a virtuous man, who consecrated all his life to being useful, and who died as he had lived—virtuous and honest. Not fear but indignation made me quit my retreat, on hearing that my wife had been murdered. I wished not to remain longer on an earth polluted with crimes.' When the poor old man first heard of his wife's death, he had wished to go at once to Paris, in order to denounce her murderers; but he remembered that if he were tried and condemned, all his property would be forfeited to the state, and his child left penniless, and therefore put an end to his own life.

Probably the happiest years of Madame de Maintenon's life were those which she spent as the wife of Scarron, and yet he was so deformed that it is wonderful that a young girl of sixteen or seventeen could be induced to accept him as her husband. But Madame de Maintenon, then Frances d'Aubigné, was an orphan and nearly penniless, and Scarron was almost the only friend she had. This well-known writer was not born the misshapen being which accident afterwards made him. As a young man he was active and well-shaped. The story of his misfortunes is as follows. He was the son of a wealthy counsellor, and was forced to enter the Church by his father, greatly against his will. He did not perform his duties as an abbé with much propriety. In Mans, as in the greater part of the cities of Provence, the carnival is closed by public masquerades. For one of these Scarron chose the following strange disguise: he first plastered his body over with honey, and then rolled himself in a feather-bed, which he had ripped open for that purpose. Thus transformed, he went to the masquerade, and drew the attention of the company entirely on himself. Of the women, some fled frightened at his approach; others crowded round him, and despoiled him of his feathers; and it was soon discovered who he was. The people now exclaimed against the scandal given to the Church. Scarron at length succeeded in making his escape; but being pursued, and finding a bridge in his way, he jumped heroically over it, and swimming to the opposite bank, lay down among the reeds to conceal himself. The cold now struck into him, and fixed in his blood the principles of those disorders which afterwards overwhelmed him. Sciatica, gout, and rheumatism sometimes seized him successively,

and sometimes all together, and rendered him an epitome of human misery. When Frances d'Aubigné married him, his body was, from the contraction of the nerves, something like the letter Z. His head hung on his breast, and his legs were drawn up; he wrote either upon his knees or upon two steel brackets fastened to the arms of his easy-chair. In spite of his sufferings, however, he was always cheerful, and even merry; and his rooms were the constant resort of the most brilliant society in Paris. When eight years after her marriage, Madame Scarron was left a widow, she wept long and sincerely for the kind and good-tempered husband she had lost.

Genius, when unaccompanied by right principles and self-control, is a more dangerous quality in a woman than a man. Nothing shews this more plainly than the life of Lady Caroline Lamb. No one was more fully alive to her faults than she was herself. When the Hon. William Lamb, then Lord Melbourne, laid his heart and fortune at her feet, she refused him, saying that she was afraid her violent temper would wreck their happiness. Again, however, he proposed; and this time, unfortunately for himself, he was accepted. Lady Caroline's fear that she could not control her temper was by no means groundless. At the marriage ceremony she was seized with a fit of passion, and she thus afterwards described her behaviour: 'I stormed at the bishop, tore my valuable dress to pieces, and was carried nearly insensible to the carriage which was to convey me for ever from my home.' Lady Caroline was certainly at times not quite sane. Lord Melbourne made her a far better husband than most men would have done; and though at last he was obliged to separate from her, he still retained a portion of his old affection.

Without undervaluing intellect, we think that no one will be inclined to deny that both in men and women the qualities of the heart are far more important than those of the head; and we cannot do better than conclude with the following lines of the late Canon Kingsley, addressed to young girls, and which bear closely on this subject:

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;  
Do noble things, not dream them all day long;  
So making life, death, and that vast forever,  
One grand, sweet song.

#### A STORY OF ADEN HARBOUR.

It is a common practice on passenger vessels, more especially on board the large 'overland' steamers voyaging to and from India, for certain of the male passengers to assemble after dark in the smoking-room or other snug retreat, and there spend the long evenings in singing songs or telling 'yarns.' On one of these occasions it had come round to the turn of an Indian officer either to sing a song or to tell a story for the benefit of his companions; so after thinking for a few minutes, and urged on by repeated calls of 'Come, go on, B—,' he at length chose the latter alternative, and commenced as follows.

Many years ago, during the last China war, I was attached to a regiment bound for the Peiho and Peking; but most unfortunately, just as we

were on the point of leaving Hong-kong for the north, my health, which had been ailing for some little while, suddenly gave way; and much to my chagrin, after appearing before a medical board, I was ordered home to England by the first mail-steamer. Naturally, the disappointment of taking leave of my companions—all in high spirits at the prospect of seeing a little field-service—was a severe trial to me; but undoubtedly my being sent away from China to a healthier climate was all for the best, for I daily grew weaker, and the disease I suffered from appeared to get a stronger hold on me, so much so, that when the homeward-bound steamer anchored in the harbour of Hong-kong, and the time came for passengers to embark, I was so ill as to be quite unable to walk, and was carried on board as helpless as a child. Soon, however, when the vessel got under weigh and faced the broad ocean, the glorious sea-air worked a gradual change for the better, and by slow degrees I began to pick up strength and spirits. We touched at Singapore to take in a supply of coal, and made a quick run thence to Ceylon, and on the evening of the sixth day came to an anchor in the beautiful harbour of Point de Galle. The Calcutta boat arrived some few hours later; and early the following morning I found myself and baggage on the deck of a crowded 'overland' steamer. After the usual bustle and confusion had in a measure subsided, and I had made the acquaintance of the purser and doctor of the ship, I obtained, by their assistance, a good airy cabin in the forepart of the vessel, away from the noise and heat of the engines, and occupied by one other passenger only—a weather-beaten old General in the Madras army, returning to England at the termination of his service.

Our steamer was named the *Nemesis*, a well-known Peninsular and Oriental vessel of former days. She was a fine large boat, splendidly fitted up and equipped, like the generality of her class, but was nevertheless, for more reasons than one, exceedingly unpopular among overland passengers in general, and deservedly so, for the following reasons. She was built almost entirely of iron throughout, and was so strongly framed that she bore to all outward appearance a greater resemblance to an armour-plated frigate than to a steamer intended to carry the government mails, a heavy cargo, and a large number of passengers. She was ill adapted for a mail-steamer on account of her very moderate rate of speed—still less so for a passenger-boat; for when loaded up with mail-boxes and merchandise she lay so low in the water that her ports could seldom be opened with safety, even in fine weather and with but little motion on the vessel. This fault in her build was a very serious objection to the *Nemesis*; for often during the hot-weather months, when the heat of the Red Sea was something terrible and overpowering, her cabins were filled with poor invalids, returning from India to their native land, to whom a breath of fresh air between the heated decks of the steamer was almost a matter of life and death.

The *Nemesis* had met with several adventures and mishaps during her career. Once, when coming down a narrow and most dangerous channel in the Hooghly, she met with a steamer

from Rangoon bound for Calcutta, passing up the river. The latter should never have been allowed to enter this narrow passage till it was clear of vessels, there being no room for two large steamers to pass each other. The *Nemesis* held straight on her course, and presently struck the Burmah steamer so terrible a blow as to cut her almost in halves without receiving any material injury to herself. This little occurrence had earned for her the sobriquet of 'the Peninsular and Oriental Ram.' On another occasion the *Nemesis* ran on shore near Point de Galle; but her powerful frame again stood her in good stead, for after scraping and bumping about for several hours among reefs of rocks that would speedily have wrecked any ordinary vessel, 'The Ram' was got off little the worse for all she had gone through. But I am wandering from my story.

Our passage from Galle to Aden was fortunately, for the time of year, a remarkably good one. The heat was certainly very distressing; but the sea was so smooth that we were able to keep the ports wide open night and day; and this was no slight boon to an invalid like myself, unable to leave his bed or to enjoy life on deck; for although there was comparatively little breeze to speak of, yet the mere motion of the vessel as she ploughed her course through the deep, caused a slight current of air to blow through the stifling cabin.

At length the bare Arabian coast was reported to be in sight; and some few hours later we slowly steamed into Aden harbour, and safely dropped our anchor amidst a crowd of shipping. I had so improved in health during our run between Galle and Aden that latterly, when the great heat of the day was over, I had been able occasionally to spend a few hours on deck, reclining in an easy-chair, propped up with pillows, and there enjoyed a talk with my companions; and two days before reaching Aden, I had made such good progress towards recovery as to be able to reach the deck without the assistance of the steward. I felt so elated at this change for the better, that a longing desire came over me to accompany some of my comrades bound for a ramble on shore, flattering myself at the same time that if I could not walk far, I could at anyrate hire a carriage of some kind, and drive about from one place to another. But my friend the doctor of the *Nemesis* very soon put an end to my project, and dissipated these illusions so soon as he heard of them, by peremptorily forbidding anything of the kind; at the same time earnestly advising me to keep quiet on board ship, for that the least exposure to the sun, or the slightest over-exertion, would assuredly bring back a return of the illness from which I was only then just recovering. Of course I had to give way and submit to my fate; though it was a sore disappointment to me to see my fellow-passengers all going ashore, while I was left behind alone. However, it could not be helped, so I amused myself by looking over a bundle of fresh newspapers giving the latest intelligence from England. But I was not long to be thus left in peace. Soon some immense lighters, deeply laden with bags of coal, and manned by gangs of half-naked savages, approached the steamer; and speedily the babel of voices alongside, the clatter of the coal as it was shot down the iron bunkers, and the cloud of

black dust which began to cover everything, drove me away from my comfortable easy-chair on deck, and forced me to take refuge in the saloon below.

The day wore on; but still the unceasing noise and uproar of the coaling continued, till about sunset, when much to my relief, the din and confusion outside the steamer suddenly ceased, and the vessel once more became quiet. Feeling tired, I made for my cabin. The steward presently came down, opened the port, and lighted a small lamp, to enable me to read while reclining in my berth. And he also brought me a bottle of iced lemonade. Then, quite in opposition to the rules of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, I smoked a cigarette in my cabin.

Gradually eve stole on, and the sun disappeared behind the towering crags of the fortress. I got tired of reading, so blew the lamp out. My berth was exactly opposite to, but considerably above the open port, so that while reclining on my couch I obtained a good view of the harbour, shipping, and shore. The air was calm and still. Lights began to glimmer among the distant houses, and I could see the signal-lamps gliding up the rigging of the vessels riding at anchor. Now and again I heard the tinkle of the ship-bells marking the hour. Presently a bright flash of flame momentarily illuminated the cabin, and then after a pause came the booming thunder of the evening gun across the water. I could hear the distant roll of the garrison drums beating the tattoo; then a profound stillness supervened, broken only by the gentle plash of the waves against the iron side of the steamer. I pulled my blanket closer round me, preparatory to taking a nap, and gradually glided into the land of forgetfulness. I must have slept for some little time, when I gradually became aware of low muttered voices. I must tell you that as it happened I had fallen asleep directly facing the open port, so that on opening my eyes, I could, without moving my position, see what was going on in the cabin. To my astonishment, the first thing I beheld was the half-naked form of a Soomalie—as the woolly headed inhabitants of Aden are called—balancing himself on the lower sill of the port. He was leaning forward and eagerly scanning the various articles of clothing, &c. scattered around. The moon was shining brightly at the time, and rendered objects on the floor and sides of the cabin clear to view; although my berth, considerably higher up, was shrouded in darkness. I was very soon wide awake on discovering this intruder, and eagerly watched his movements. The rascal kept up a low converse with some confederate apparently in a boat on the outside of the steamer; and as he glanced round the cabin, I fancied that I could see the glitter of his black eye. For a second he looked furtively up in my direction, and I imagined that he had discovered me. But no. I was well concealed by the darkness, and remained perfectly motionless. At length, my friend with the curly head seemed to have decided upon making a prize of a gay Cashmere dressing-gown, the property of my fellow-passenger the old General, which article of raiment hung suspended from a peg on the door of the apartment, and as it happened was rendered fully conspicuous by the light of the moon. Presently a long forked stick was handed up from the outside of the ship

to the would-be thief, who stretching out his arm, by a dexterous twitch with the tip of this weapon removed the coveted garment from the peg, and then turning the stick round and round, gradually wound the valuable article into a ball, preparatory to drawing it towards him and removing it altogether.

Things had now reached a crisis. While this scene was being enacted within a few yards of me, I had been rapidly revolving in my mind what was to be done to punish this rascal, and at the same time to prevent him from carrying off my comrade's property. A heavily knobbed stick, called a 'Penang lawyer,' was resting on two pegs within easy reach of my hand; but I felt certain that long before I could possess myself of this weapon, the thief would discover me, and immediately escape. However, there was not a moment to be lost; so I slowly raised myself on my elbow, intending to make a sudden clutch at the stick, when the knuckles of my hand touched something hard lying on the edge of the berth, and the next moment I had firmly grasped the neck of the empty lemonade bottle. And not a moment too soon; for already the thief, who had been leaning forward while disengaging the dressing-gown, was slowly recovering his former position, and in another moment would doubtless have successfully accomplished his design. But I was well above him, and he was yet within easy range. So raising myself on my left hand, I suddenly leaned forward and hurled the heavy glass bottle full at the curly pate of the cabin invader, and with a good aim, for the conical end of the missile struck him a tremendous blow, apparently full in the centre of his skull. With a yell of pain and fright he dropped stick, dressing-gown, and all; and in spite of the thump which he had received on his cranium, which was sufficient to have fractured the skull of a European—though seemingly it made little impression on the thick skull of this Soomâlie—he dropped down into the boat with the agility of a monkey, and quickly disappeared. By the time that my shouts had brought one of the stewards of the ship to my assistance, all trace of the thieves had disappeared; though one of the watch on deck, when questioned, remembered noticing a boat paddled by two natives making off at speed from the side of the vessel.

We got under weigh the following morning at daylight; and when the hour to dress came round, it was discovered for the first time that numerous articles of clothing had mysteriously disappeared. Fortunately, however, nothing of any great value had been taken; though a lady in the next cabin had to mourn the loss of a waterproof cloak, which doubtless, like the other missing articles, had fallen a prey to the thieves of Aden harbour.

#### PLAYMATES.

A TRIPPING footfall on the stair—  
A vision from 'Le Follet'—  
A sudden fragrance in the air—  
Ye gods! can this be Molly?  
This 'symphony' in silver white,  
Perchance some star—off duty—  
Come down to set us mortals right  
Upon ideas of beauty.

Or snow-flake that has lost its way—

Its path in life mistaken—  
Some dream that flies at break of day,  
And leaves us loath to waken.  
The Molly that I knew of yore,  
Was but a chit of seven,  
In sandalled shoes and pinafore—  
While I was just eleven.

A pair of youthful lovers we  
In days of childish folly,  
Ere Time had stole a march on me,  
And carried off my Molly.  
'Relentless parents' came between.  
Behold Miss Mary Seaton  
Consigned to boarding-school routine—  
And me—a fag at Eton.

Ah, Molly, I shall ne'er forget  
The day on which we parted;  
I think you cried, you small coquette;  
But I was broken-hearted.  
A Niobe in garments brief,  
Your tears were quite in season;  
But then your doll had come to grief—  
An all-sufficing reason.

I still preserve with tender care  
Your Prayer-book—frayed with kissing—  
A relic much the worse for wear,  
With half the pages missing.  
Have you the many-bladed knife  
I gave you once?—I wonder.  
The most unlucky gift in life;  
It left our paths asunder.

My sweetheart of the Past is dead—  
That mourned her broken 'Dolly';  
And now I turn to greet instead  
This most imposing Molly.  
Observe—A dress of filmy lace  
Beyond my powers of painting—  
A tiny vinaigrette—in case  
The maid should think of fainting.

A dainty cap (I think I'm right)  
The golden head surmounting—  
A pair of gloves whose buttons quite  
Defy attempts at counting.  
A satin fan where baby-loves  
That seem to weary never,  
Disport themselves in myrtle groves  
That blossom on for ever.

A gleam of gems whose elfin light  
In weird and fitful flashes  
Reflects the eyes—demurely bright  
Beneath their shady lashes. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*  
'And did you not forget?' she says.—  
'Forget you, Molly, never!  
The love of Eton jacket days  
Is just as green as ever.'—  
'You silly boy.'—'As silly still,  
Ah, Molly, do not doubt it.'—  
'My glove has come unbuttoned, Will.  
.... How long you are about it!'

GEORGE WARRINGTON.

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